

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Joanna Iovino and I live in Hartford, Connecticut. I support Senate Bill No. 1178: *An Act Expanding Connecticut Paid Sick Days*.

Maybe if all workers were offered paid sick days by their employers, a person in my situation, who relies on a fixed income from SSD to make their way through life would be able to work (at least part-time) to ease their burden. My disability doesn't prevent me from working EVERY day, but if I start working and start becoming symptomatic, I would be in trouble.

If I started working, my food stamps would decrease. My rent would increase (I have a section 8 voucher). My Medicare insurance cost may no longer be covered by the state.

So, imagine that I decided to work, then became symptomatic. Without paid sick time, I'd have to rely on less money to cover more bills, because the change in my SNAP benefits and my rent would be based on income over time, not on the week I need to take off because of my disability. For this reason, I can't work a paid job right now. I can't take the chance of an (even temporary) cut in my income when my expenses have increased based on income.

Let's take it a step further. Let's pretend I am a parent. A parent who needs to work to support my children. A parent who struggles to pay rent, buy food and clothing, pay for school trips, and pay child care expenses. Without paid sick time.

Well, maybe I'd come to work ill. Maybe I'd have no choice because missing a day's pay could mean missing meals. Or not being able to pay for laundry or new shoes for the kids. I wonder how many parents went to work with covid symptoms because they couldn't afford a day without pay? I wonder how many parents have sent their children to school sick because they can't take an unpaid day off to watch their children and can't afford a sitter. We need to address this now!

As such, I support an expansion of Paid Sick Days as outlined in Senate Bill No. 1178: *An Act Expanding Connecticut Paid Sick Days*.

1. Cover all workers regardless of employer size or industry!
2. Eliminates the waiting period to take a paid sick day from 680 hours to immediately after you start working!
3. Include all types of family structures and relationships that will allow workers to care for a child of any age, as well as their chosen family! The bill would also allow you to take paid sick time to care for a family member who experiences family violence or sexual assault.

4. Increase the number of hours of paid sick time workers can accrue and use per year from 40 to 80 hours.
5. Protect against future pandemics by allowing paid sick time to be used when a worker's place of work or child's school/place of care is closed by public officials for a public health emergency!

Thank you for your time,  
Joanna Iovino Hartford, CT